

**RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING**

Friday, May 6, 2016
RIDOA, Conference Room A
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

DRAFT MINUTES

I. Attendance

1. Members Present

Mr. Robert Azar, Chair	City of Providence
Mr. Jared Rhodes, Secretary	RI Statewide Planning Program
Mr. John Chambers	Fuss & O'Neill, Incorporated
Mr. Nate Kelly	American Planning Association, RI Chapter
Mr. Thomas Kogut	RI Public Utilities Commission
Ms. Nicole LaFontaine	Town of North Kingstown
Ms. Lisa Primiano	RI Department of Environmental Management
Ms. Jennifer Siciliano	City of Woonsocket
Mr. Michael Walker	RI Commerce Corporation
Mr. Jeffrey Willis	RI Coastal Resources Management Council
Mr. Ronald Wolanski	Town of Middletown

2. Members Absent

Mr. Michael DeLuca, Vice Chair	Town of Narragansett
Mr. Steve Devine	RI Department of Transportation
Ms. Ashley Hahn	Town of Exeter
Ms. Eliza Lawson	RI Department of Health
Mr. Arnold Robinson	Roger Williams University

3. Staff Present

Mr. Parag Agrawal	RI Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Kimberly Crabill	RI Statewide Planning Program
Mr. Paul Gonsalves	RI Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Nancy Hess	RI Statewide Planning Program

4. Guests Present

Ms. Sue Kiernan	Department of Environmental Management
Mr. Ernie Panciera	Department of Environmental Management
Ms. Amy Pettine	Rhode Island Public Transit Authority

II. Agenda Items

1. Call to Order

Chairman Azar called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

2. Approval of January 8, 2015 Meeting Minutes – for action

Chairman Azar asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of January 8, 2016. Mr. Walker moved to approve and the motion was seconded by Mr. Chambers. There was no discussion. The following members voted aye: Azar, Chambers, Kelly, Kogut, LaFontaine, Siciliano, Walker, Willis, and Wolanski. Mr. Rhodes abstained. Ms. Primiano was not present at this time. There were no nay votes.

3. Public Comment on Agenda Items – for discussion

There was none.

4. State Guide Plan Update: Water Quality 2035 – for action

Chairman Azar introduced Nancy Hess from Statewide Planning and Sue Kiernan from the Department of Environmental Management who gave the Committee an update on the Draft Water Quality 2035 plan and requested authorization for it to go to Public Hearing. Discussion was as follows:

Ms. Primiano questioned whether the \$1.8 billion figure was for storm water. Ms. Kiernan responded that the figure was for waste water only.

Mr. Azar asked what the status of efforts to develop storm water utility districts was. Ms. Kiernan provided a detailed background overviewing the status of various initiatives that are ongoing across the state.

Mr. Wolanski then provided some insights as to Middletown's experience and the opposition that they are getting from what the public is seeing as a "rain tax".

Mr. Kelly mentioned that the Phase II permits are also starting to come out and that he expects that these will help the utility district discussions to start getting more traction.

Mr. Walker then emphasized that the costs need to be balanced against the benefits, especially when RI's business climate and the impact of another tax upon it, is taken into consideration. Mr. Walker cautioned against stating in section 7-14 that we are going to provide technical and financial assistance to municipalities to establish funding mechanisms for storm water improvement.

Mr. Azar noted the realities of the impacts, both environmentally and fiscally, that are falling onto the municipalities and that in his opinion the language on page 7 – 14 strikes a correct tone.

Ms. Kiernan next noted the three areas of water infrastructure - drinking water, waste water, and storm water and the need to ensure that all three are properly accounted for.

Mr. Kelly then took the opportunity to make the committee aware of the assistance that the American Planning Association could potentially offer in addressing the challenge.

Chairman Azar asked for a motion to recommend that the State Planning Council authorize a public hearing on the draft. Mr. Willis made the first motion and the motion was seconded by Ms. Siciliano. There was no discussion. The following members voted aye: Azar, Chambers, Kelly, Kogut, LaFontaine, Primiano, Siciliano, Walker, Willis, and Wolanski. Mr. Rhodes abstained. There were no nay votes.

5. Draft FY 17 Unified Transportation Planning Work Program - *for discussion*

Chairman Azar introduced Jared Rhodes who overviewed the content and structure of the Draft UPWP. Discussion was as follows:

Mr. Kelly asked Mr. Rhodes to explain what the Municipal Transportation Sea-level Rise Vulnerability Project was which Mr. Rhodes subsequently provided.

Mr. Kelly then asked if there was any internal discussion about the growth centers implementation as to whether that is something that will come back up. Mr. Rhodes responded that it is on hold for now.

Mr. Walker asked if freight would be added to the travel demand model. Mr. Rhodes responded that it is being considered and that Division of Planning (DOP) is working with its consultants to identify what value would be added by specifically including truck movements.

Mr. Walker stated that we are making transportation decisions, in part, based on what the travel demand model is telling us but we are not capturing the truck movements. We are only capturing passenger cars for determining congestion mitigation. In developing the freight plan we have talked about how much that component needs to be there, not only for freight planning process, but also for the infrastructure plan. Mr. Rhodes responded that DOP recognizes that and is working on determining how to include that in the model. He continued by stating over the past year to year and half DOP has been working to significantly improve the travel demand model by including a transit component.

Mr. Kelly asked for clarification of task 17.1 the "Public Participation Guide" specifically whether it is relegated to transportation only or whether it is a broader part of the MPO suite of guidance. Mr. Rhodes responded that it was both.

Ms. Primiano noted that there are four vacancies in the division and asked if Statewide Planning is planning to fill them. Mr. Rhodes responded that they are seeking to do so. Mr. Agrawal also noted that Statewide Planning will soon be in the process of filling them.

6. Announcements – *for discussion*

None.

7. Adjourn

Chairman Azar called for a motion to adjourn. Committee member Walker made the first motion. The motion was seconded by Committee member Primiano. There was no discussion. The following members voted aye: Azar, Chambers, Kelly, Kogut, LaFontaine, Primiano, Siciliano, Walker, Willis, and Wolanski. Mr. Rhodes abstained. There were no nay votes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jared L. Rhodes, II
Secretary